FREE EXCLUSIVE CD-ROM

ROBOT WARS

ROBOT WARS

MAGAZINE

NEW!

SIR KILLALOT'S MISSION

I MUST DESTROY!

HIT THE PITS
THE LATEST NEWS

HOUSE ROBOTS?
WE'LL TAKE 'EM DOWN

MATILDA REVEALED
FLIPPIN' FANTASTIC!

ISSUE 1 / APRIL / £1-50

100% OFFICIAL 100% ACTION

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BBC

ROBOT WARS

ISSUE 01 / APRIL 2000

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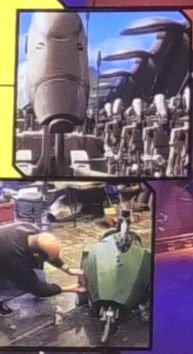
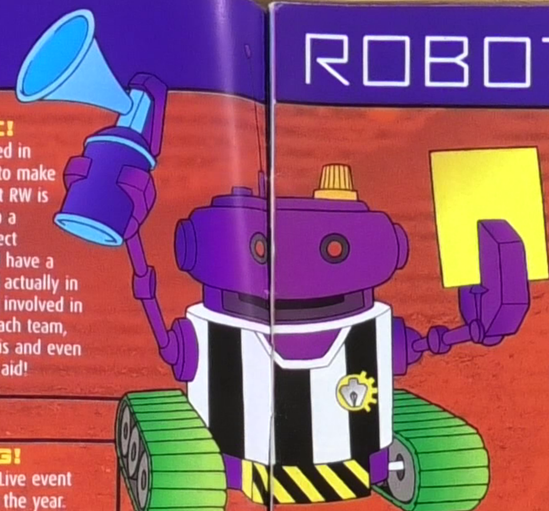


REFEREE!

Video is being used in sports like cricket to make tricky decisions, but RW is set to take things to a new level with 'Project Refbot'. Series IV will have a decision-making droid actually in the arena. It won't get involved in fights, but will watch each team, decide who the winner is and even dish out emergency first aid!



LIVE & FLIPPING!

Dates for the first Robot Wars Live event are being discussed for later in the year. It sounds like it will be huge, with the house bots strutting their stuff for crazy fans while dozens of competitors scrap it out all around them. We want tickets NOW!

ROBOT REPORT

THE LATEST NEWS FROM THE PITS...

HYP HYP HOORAY!

Team Hypnodisc are developing a new weapon, and it's NOT another disc! Bearing in mind how they trashed the last wars, expect it to dish out massive punishment!

MEANER ARENA

Plans for Series IV of RW are already underway, with the programme makers looking for a bigger arena to let more spectators watch. With tickets to the last series like gold dust, that can only be a good thing.

HOW MUCH IS THAT DOGGY ON THE WEBSITE?

Pitbull, the robot with chomping jaws, is being auctioned off. It did well in the last wars, but that's no guarantee for Series IV. Interested? Then try i.want.pitbull@botting.demon.co.uk. Bidding starts at £500, so you'd better start saving now!

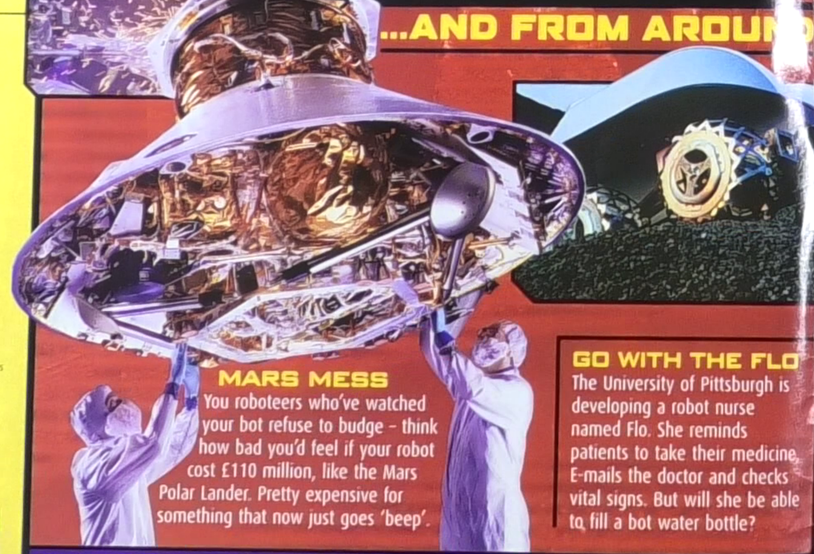
WE HAVE LIFT OFF!

Give yourselves a big pat on the back – you're the owner of the first ever **Robot Wars Magazine**! Here it is at last, and we hope you agree it was worth the wait! Whether you're mad for **Matilda**, crazy for **Sir Killalot** or potty about **Plunderbird**, there's something for you in these pages. A real highlight is the interview with **Jonathan Pearce**, who's usually so busy whipping the excitement up that you don't have time to wonder what makes him tick.

Oh, and you might have noticed that there's a shiny new **CD-ROM** stuck on the front cover! It's not available in any shops and has loads of exclusive screensavers, games, commentary and vids that'll blow you away. Turn to page 12 for more news on how to send in your high scores. A word of warning, though – **DON'T** lend it to your mates – or you'll never get it back. That's enough from us – let the wars begin!

THE EDITORS

...AND FROM AROUND THE WORLD



MARS MESS

You roboteers who've watched your bot refuse to budge – think how bad you'd feel if your robot cost £110 million, like the Mars Polar Lander. Pretty expensive for something that now just goes 'beep'.

GO WITH THE FLO

The University of Pittsburgh is developing a robot nurse named Flo. She reminds patients to take their medicine, E-mails the doctor and checks vital signs. But will she be able to fill a bot water bottle?

SNOW-MAD

Nomad is a 4-wheeled bot from NASA, that's searching Antarctica for meteorites. It sorts space waste from regular rocks and there's talk of sending it to Mars in the future.

BAD BOT BETS

Events similar to RW have been happening in the USA for a while, but they may be getting out of control. Unofficial battles have been taking place, with big money bets. The losing roboteer has to watch as the winners drive over his bot in a truck!

HOW TO USE YOUR CD-ROM

The Robot Wars CD-ROM requires the following minimum specification to work, but may run on a lower specified system:

- A multimedia PC with Pentium 166 processor and 32MB of RAM
- x8 speed CD-ROM drive
- High-colour (16-bit) display
- Sound Blaster 16 sound card (or 100% compatible)
- Suitable speakers/headphones
- Mouse or other pointing device
- Windows® 95 or 98

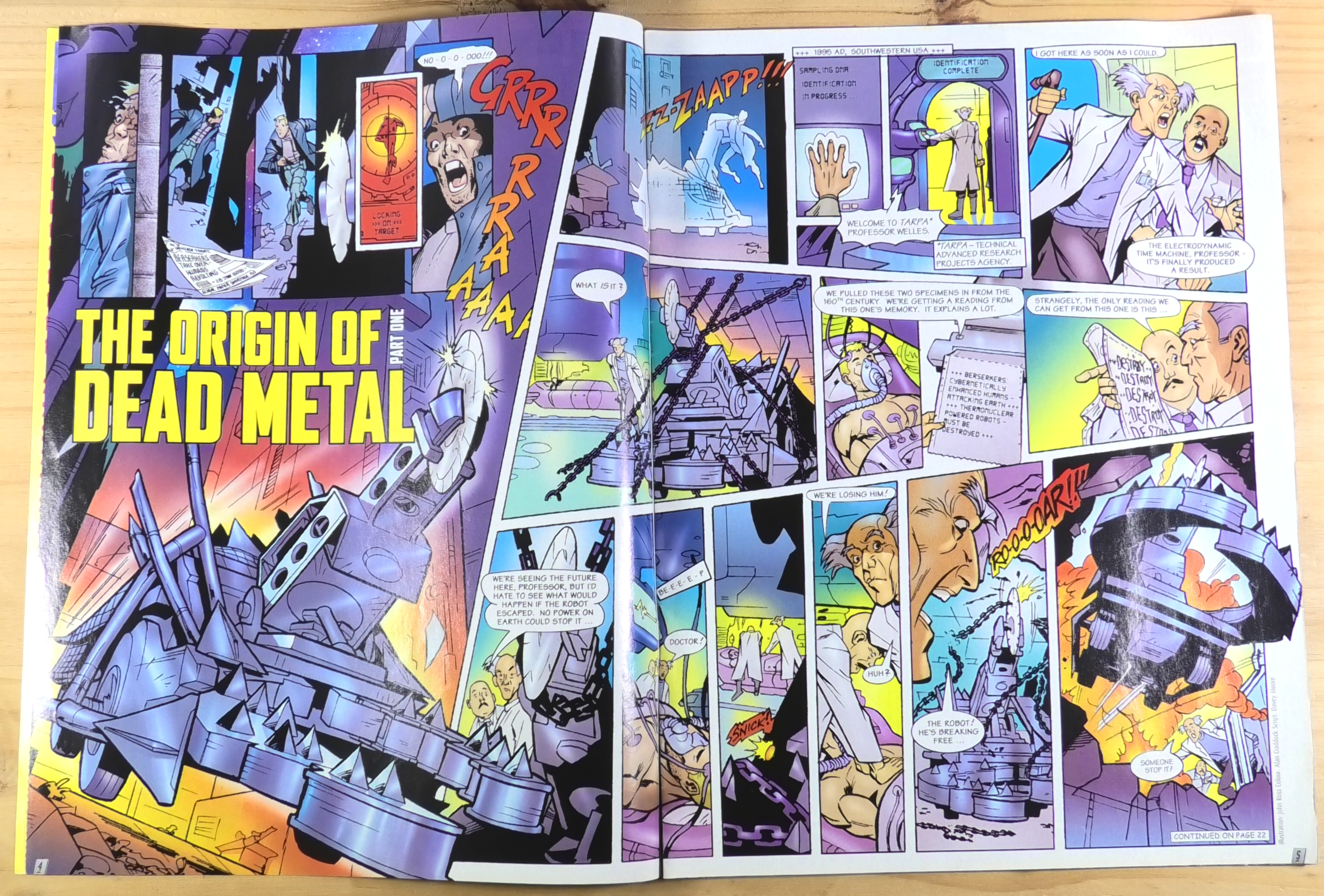
To install your Robot Wars CD ROM: Ensure that Microsoft Windows® 95 or 98 is running with no other applications open, then insert the CD-ROM into your CD-ROM drive. If Autorun is enabled on your computer, the installation program will start after a few seconds. You should then follow the instructions from (C) below. If you do not have Autorun, start at (A).

A From your Windows® desktop, choose Start and then Run.
B On the command line type D:\SETUP.EXE (if your CD-ROM drive is not drive D, substitute the correct drive letter) then click OK.
C To install the program, follow the instructions on screen. If in doubt, choose the default options as you proceed. Once you have completed the installation, you may be prompted to shut down and then restart your computer. If you are, please do so.

ROBOT WARS MAGAZINE 100% OFFICIAL 100% ACTION

SAFETY WARNING!

DO NOT ATTEMPT TO BUILD OR OPERATE A ROBOT WITHOUT FIRST JOINING THE RW CLUB TO GET OUR SAFETY GUIDELINES. SEE PAGE 12 FOR DETAILS OF HOW TO JOIN!


THE ORIGIN OF DEAD METAL
PART ONE
NO - O - O - OOO!!!
GRRRRRRAAAA
LOCKING >>> ON <<< TARGET
BERSERKERS TAKE OVER HUMANS REVOLTING
ZZ-ZAAPP!!!
+++ 1995 AD, SOUTHWESTERN USA +++
SAMPLING DNA ... IDENTIFICATION IN PROGRESS ...
IDENTIFICATION COMPLETE
WELCOME TO TARPA* PROFESSOR WELLES.
*TARPA – TECHNICAL ADVANCED RESEARCH PROJECTS AGENCY.
I GOT HERE AS SOON AS I COULD.
THE ELECTRODYNAMIC TIME MACHINE, PROFESSOR - IT'S FINALLY PRODUCED A RESULT.
WHAT IS IT ?
WE PULLED THESE TWO SPECIMENS IN FROM THE 160TH CENTURY. WE'RE GETTING A READING FROM THIS ONE'S MEMORY. IT EXPLAINS A LOT.
+++ BERSERKERS: CYBERNETICALLY ENHANCED HUMANS - ATTACKING EARTH +++ +++ THERMONUCLEAR POWERED ROBOTS - MUST BE DESTROYED +++
STRANGELY, THE ONLY READING WE CAN GET FROM THIS ONE IS THIS ...
DESTROY
WE'RE SEEING THE FUTURE HERE, PROFESSOR, BUT I'D HATE TO SEE WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF THE ROBOT ESCAPED. NO POWER ON EARTH COULD STOP IT ...
BE-E-E-E-P
DOCTOR!
SNICK!
WE'RE LOSING HIM!
HUH?
RO-O-O-OAR!!!
THE ROBOT! HE'S BREAKING FREE ...
SOMEONE STOP IT!
CONTINUED ON PAGE 22
Illustration: John Ross Colour: Alan Craddock Script: Davey Moore

IRON MAIDEN

SPECIFICATIONS

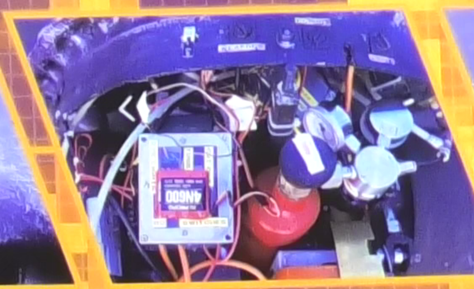
NAME	MATILDA
WEIGHT	116KG
LENGTH	140CM
WIDTH	66CM
HEIGHT	66CM
SPEED	19KM/H
NAVIGATION	TANK STEERING
METHOD OF ATTACK	STRIKE WITH TUSKS AT SPEED & FLIP

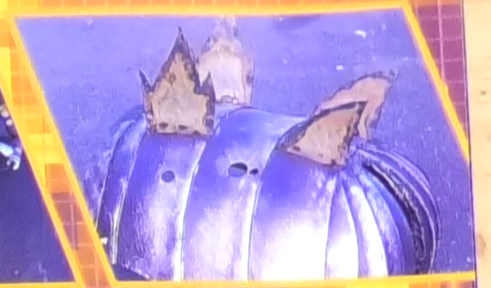
It might have something to do with her piercing eyes and glittering tusks. It might be the fact she has caused grown roboteers to choke back tears when their creations are crushed by a girl, but Matilda has won the hearts of all Robot Wars fans.

The show's creators always wanted to have one female among the house robots. "We wanted a girl's name that sounded hard," says Robot Wars executive producer Steve Carsey, who came up with the names for all the house robots. "Matilda fitted the bill – it sounds tomboy-ish. For a while we called her Sharon."

She was developed from drawings by comic book artist Tom Carney, who was asked to come up with ideas for house robots when the TV show was being planned in 1995. Although she ended up as a dinosaur/alien-metal-bug-type she-devil, Matilda originally looked more like a tin porcupine. "She was much simpler, and there was no room to put a chainsaw, or other weapons," says James Davies, who helped to build and drive her for Series III.

"We changed quite a lot from the original drawings, but we tried to keep the same spirit – it was always going to be an organic-looking robot."





As with the other house robots, when it came to customising Matilda, she was built up around the all-important weaponry. A house bot without a supply of mean, metal-mangling machinery is about as much use as a chocolate teapot. In Matilda's case, she was supplied with a 3000 rpm chainsaw and hydraulic tusk flippers. The eyes, to stare opponents into submission, came later.

Once the drive chassis and weaponry were in place, they were mixed with a pair of quarter horsepower electric motors. They run two foam-filled go-cart wheels, with the robot supported by castors at the front and back. Next, the design team constructed a prototype cardboard shell. Beware next time you're in the supermarket with your mum – lurking among the boxes behind the cash tills might be the next house robot.

The next stage was to sculpt the shell in finer detail using clay. With Matilda, it took four different designs before a plastercast mould was made. Using this 'waste' mould (called that because it is smashed to release its contents), the final shell was constructed out of fibreglass. Chris Reynolds, special effects supervisor for the show, reckons fibreglass is the ideal material: "You have a hard time getting an axe through it, plus it's very light. It doesn't stop everything, but to do that you'd have to have steel plate which would be too heavy."

"For a while, we called her SHARON!"

Of the house robots, Matilda has the advantage of being small and fast. As a result, she's usually first on the scene, prodding and sawing the contestants in her way. It's up to the driver to supply her personality. "You do get into character when you drive them – I *am* Matilda – I put a skirt on!" jokes James.

With the contestant robots improving in quality in Series III, Matilda has had to have several upgrades. She is now twice as fast thanks to new speed controllers, with more controllable tusks, and has been totally rewired to avoid any embarrassing smoking circuitry like in Series II. "The competition last year was superb," Chris says. "Matilda's been taking quite a battering – she was outclassed."

But as far as Series IV is concerned, it's bad news for contestant robots, with rumours that Lady M will have a new weapon in place of her chainsaw. And what is it exactly? Let's just say there's a chance that it's large, round, and it spins. Watch your heads...

MATILDA moments

> In Series I Matilda was flipped by Rex Garrod's **Recyclopse**. It was the first time a house robot had been flipped and saw the start of Rex's mission to attack and flip house robots whenever possible.

> At the end of Series II, Matilda and the house robots were put up against all remaining contestant robots. She was equipped with a black **gunpowder charge** which was set off by radio control. It made her spin on the spot, sending sparks and flames high into the air!

> During Series II Matilda was the only robot that could be relied upon to steer in a straight line, so was the first choice for the **Joust**, where she crushed most opponents by charging with her tusks at speed.

> In Series III Matilda came up against the dreaded **Hypnodisc** and took a terrible thrashing. Both her tusks were chopped off by the whirling wonder!

>who's behind MATILDA?

JAMES DAVIES, OPERATOR

>What is it like to drive Matilda?
>There are two of us operating Matilda, one controlling the weapons. There's not time to practise, you practise on the job. It takes a few days to get sorted. After that, it's all unspoken, the other person just knows when to use the flippers and chainsaw.

>What problems have you had with her?
>Once, I drove Matilda off the stage and right into a steel post that sheared off a switch and she short-circuited. I was ripping the robot open and thinking 'What's wrong?' She was completely dead.

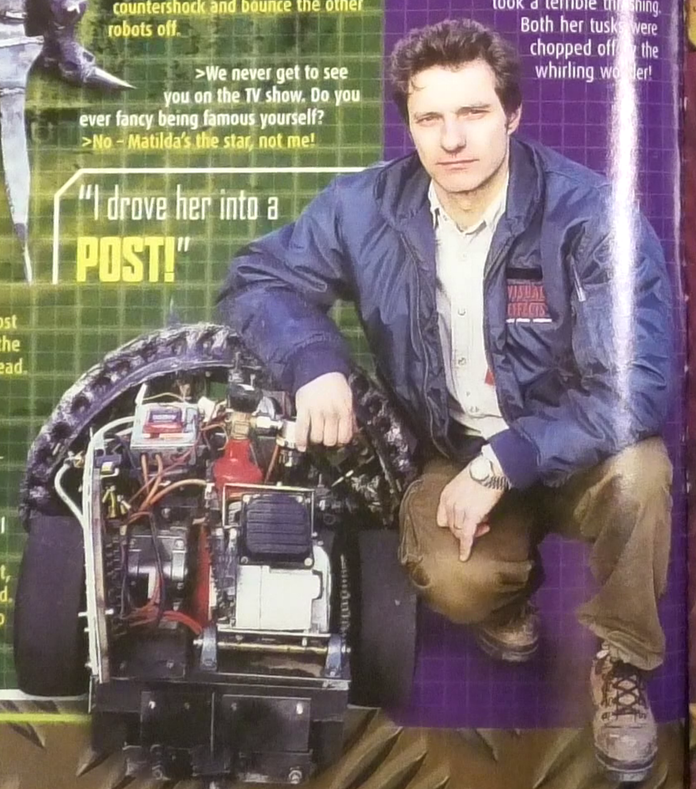
>Has she ever been unable to go back out into the arena?
>The worst damage isn't inflicted by other robots, it's from running her for so long. We're operating her for 10 hours a day – the contestant robots only have to last three minutes!

>Matilda seems to get flipped quite a lot. Any plans to install a self-righting mechanism?
>She is the lightest house robot, so she does get flipped a lot, but it doesn't matter if she does. I quite like it if she gets flipped. You could put a self-righting mechanism in, but it would take up valuable space where you could put a weapon.

>Have you got any secret plans for her?
>I did toy with the idea of explosive armour like they have in modern tanks. It would repel any impacts with a countershock and bounce the other robots off.

>We never get to see you on the TV show. Do you ever fancy being famous yourself?
>No – Matilda's the star, not me!

"I drove her into a **POST!**"



WIN!

100 GREAT RW VIDEOS! MINUTES OF MAYHEM! PERCENT ACTION!

This brand new Universal video has roboteers from every corner of the globe fighting it out to decide who's the king of the world. Presenters Craig Charles and Philippa Forrester are back in charge, Jonathan Pearce is on top commentating form, and the house robots are all up to their usual tricks! It's 100 minutes of action no RW fan will want to be without. None of the footage has been screened on TV, so if you're one of our jammy winners, you're in for a real treat...

SEE... THE MYSTERIOUS FATE OF THE AMERICANS
ENGLAND'S CHAOS 2 IN SERIOUS TROUBLE
BELGIUM'S AMAZING BISCUIT TIN ROBOT
A CZECH BOT WITH A CRAZY SLOGAN
NORTHERN IRELAND'S EXPERT DRIVING SKILLS BY TEAM WELD-DOR
THE ARENA AUDIENCE GO CRAZY AS THEY POUND THE MACROLON SAFETY SCREENS
AND LOADS, LOADS, LOADS MORE!

RWM has teamed up with Universal Pictures Video to give away **100 COPIES**, worth around **£12.99** each in the shops.

For a chance to win a copy, just answer this question:

Which house robot has a flame-thrower?

Send your answers on a postcard (to arrive no later than 28 April 2000) to:

Robot Wars Magazine Competitions, PO Box 114, Leatherhead, Surrey KT22 9DG.

Robot Wars Magazine Competition Rules.
Robot Wars Magazine Competitions, PO Box 114, Leatherhead, Surrey KT22 9DG. RWM competitions are open to residents of the UK, Eire and the Channel Islands, except employees of the BBC, RWM printers, Robot Wars programme makers and anyone else connected with the competitions and their families. Winners will be the first correct entries drawn after the closing date. No purchase necessary. No responsibility can be accepted for entries lost or damaged in the post. Prizes are subject to availability. If, in circumstances beyond our control, the prize offered is unavailable, an alternative and equivalent prize will be sought. All entrants are bound by the rules. RWM will not enter into any correspondence. All winners will be notified accordingly and their names and addresses will be available on request.

TRANSGLOBAL INTERCONTINENTAL VIDEOVISUAL ROBOT MAYHEM!

they talk the talk in the pits, but will the bad boys of the International Wreck Crew walk the walk in the arena?

WE DON'T DO INTERVIEWS!

>You got knocked out early in the last wars – why?
MO We had a mechanical malfunction and we decided to leave and fix it! Some people might call that losing...

>It had nothing to do with you being beaten in the arena?
MO No, nothing at all! We weren't beaten, we 'malfunctioned', so we weren't actually beaten. Because we malfunctioned, Thermidor took advantage of our situation.
KB But we will be meeting them again...

>You feel they didn't act properly?
KB Thermidor's not a bad little robot – but we're going to take it out next time we see it.

>You're always very confident – but you haven't actually won the competition yet...
MO We've got to set the stage for a dramatic victory. It's all part of our master plan, see.

>So it's all gone 'according to plan' so far?
MO Absolutely. This is our millennium. Some time in this 1000 years, we're going to win it.

"It's all part of our **MASTER PLAN**"

>What reaction do you get from other teams? Do they envy you?
MO It's only natural for humans to recognise authority and superiority.
KB We started with the uniforms and the attitude and the image. Other teams are taking that on board. They're giving themselves identities.

>Which teams?
MO The Irish guys with Nemesis. But Sir Chromalot are a bunch of girlies, and we're going to put them in their place.

>What have you got lined up?
BK Lots of surprises...

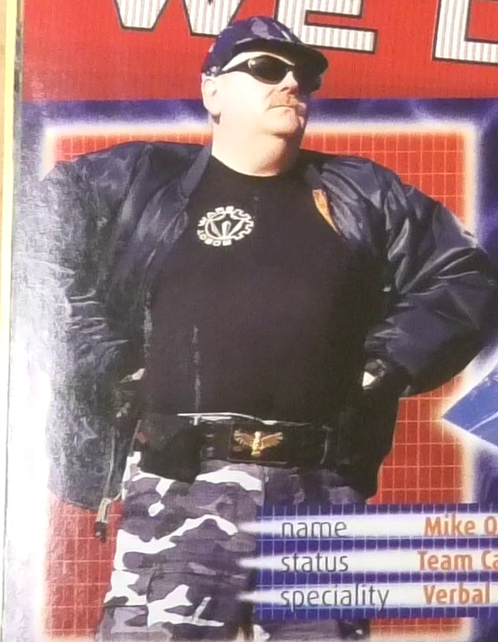
>There's talk you're developing a new weapon. Can you give any clues?
MO It's going to be a spinny-roundy-pokey-outey thing. That's the technical description.

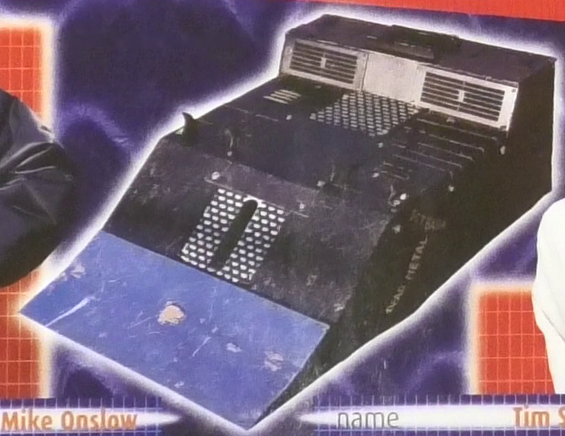
>Is there a name for it?
KB Plunderbolt. As in a 'bolt from the blue'. But it's not going to be blue. Blue robots are bad luck.
BK Plunderbug One is coming, too – eight legs, very mean looking.

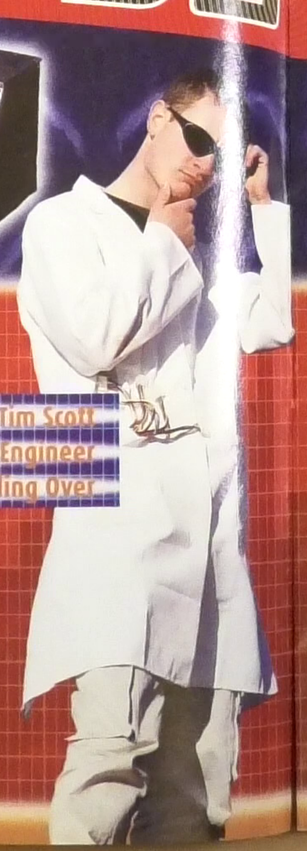
>What do people say when they meet you?
KB 99% of people think we're great, but 1% don't and are jealous. The 99% who think we're pretty good are always up for a laugh. The most surprising thing to the public is the size of the robots 'cos they all think that they're like remote-controlled cars. When we say it's 80 kilos they don't realise that's 13 stone.
BK When we went on stage last time, I heard someone shout, "It's them, it's them, it's the Plunderbirds!" and the whole audience just went wild – we love it.
MO People ask: 'How did you invent the image?' We say, 'What image? This is us!'

name	Ken Burr
status	Weapons Officer
speciality	Persuasion

name	Bryan Kilburn
status	The Other One
speciality	Infiltration







name	Mike Onslow
status	Team Captain
speciality	Verbal Aggro

name	Tim Scott
status	Team Engineer
speciality	Falling Over

>What do people think of when they hear the word 'Plunderbird'?
MO They think "Cool, it's got plenty of attitude, they're up for a good laugh."

>What's the role of your new team member?
MO His role is to look stupid and make us look really good!
KB He's come on board as a mechanic. Of course, he has to do what we tell him.

>Can we expect any image change?
MO A bit more over the top and a lot more attitude. We've got a new song, too. We will be expecting people to practise the words so that when we do a public performance they will sing along. If they don't they'll be in trouble!

>How do you feel about your two trophies?
MO In the first series they gave us best design, but our machine got assaulted. In the second they gave us the sportsmanship award. They assaulted us in the first series, and insulted us in the second, by calling us sportsmen!

"We ain't **MESSING ABOUT** this year"

>What are your feelings towards the house robots?
BK They're a bunch of wimps, really.
KB No other team robot has ever beaten two house robots in one discipline, and we managed to do it last year when we were in King Of The Castle. We took out Sergeant Bash and Dead Metal. That really annoyed them.
MO One of our major grudges is with Shunt because he's knocked us out twice. In Series II we were head to head with him. It was only the fact that he got stuck that made us back off and then he came and mullered us! There's unfinished business with Shunt. We'll finish it one of these days – for sure!

>Is that a threat?
KB Message for the House Roboteers: 'I hope your robots are ready, because we're going to take them down. Get out your screwdrivers and your welding kit, because we ain't messing about this year, boys!'
MO Message for the fans: 'Be afraid – there's a Plunderstorm coming!'

THE WRECK CREW RAP

we are the Wreck Crew and we're here to tell you
we're gonna bash them, we're gonna trash them
in the wars you know we're gonna thrash them
the forecast's bad, you'd better get runnin'
it's gonna be tough – there's a Plunderstorm comin'!

there's danger in the air
so you'd better take care
the crew is back and we're gonna attack
we're comin' for you down in the arena
ain't nobody ever gonna be meaner

your dreams will be gone,
but we don't care
we just carry on, we'll always be there
we never give up or run away
'cos the Wrecking Crew is here to stay

we spell trouble with a capital 'T'
[illegible]
if you think you're tough then be our guest
'cos we are the best, we destroy the rest

the metal monster is big and mean
no-one mess, it's just a machine
shows no fear, will not surrender
so you'd better get ready for a bender-bender!

WIN PLUNDERBIRD

Proving that they're not all bad, the Plunderbird boys have donated a signed, scale model of their original mean machine and the famous team 'bomb' to **rwm**! 10 runners-up will get an International Wreck Crew keyring. To have a chance, tell us: **Who is the Wreck Crew team captain?**

Send your answer to:
Plunderbird Competition
Robot Wars Magazine
PO Box 114, Leatherhead,
Surrey KT22 9DG

Closing date: 28 April 2000
Full comp rules on page 9

ROBOT WARS CLUB

LONDON W1P OLD TEL 0207 323 9435

MEMBER OF THE MONTH

If you're already a club member, you could be our member of the month. Just write to the address above with a picture of yourself telling us all about yourself and your fave things about TV's best show!

TOP OF THE LEAGUE

Enjoying your Robot Wars Magazine CD-Rom? Thought so. If you reckon you're hot stuff when it comes to the game on it, you can e-mail your score (with the code you are given) to **rwm@bbc.co.uk**. We'll print a league table of the best virtual roboteers out there, so get practising.

LUCKY NUMBER

Each month we'll print 20 club membership numbers and if one of them's yours, you'll win an exclusive Robot Wars goody bag, containing a record bag, sweatshirt, T-shirt, posters, sew-on badge, wallet, key ring and video. This month's numbers are:

00030	12003	00084	10654	1178
10242	03526	15028	20024	21782
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17441	20111	01000	09891	24103

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Address .....

..... Postcode .....

Daytime phone number .....

Card number ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Valid from ☐☐☐☐ Expiry date ☐☐☐☐

Signature ..... Date .....

a of z CONTESTANT ROBOTS

a is for **AGENT ORANGE**

The makers claim it has 'the most weaponry of any robot' and that its nasty chomping jaw can happily nibble through 25mm of aluminium. Not only that, it's got an axe powered by a bike starter motor. If you come up against it you'll know you've been Tangoed!

b is for **BEHEMOTH** This 'great and evil beast' was built in the garage by a young team of model makers, with the help of money from their university. It could almost be Shunt's kid brother, with its titanium scoop on the front and twin axes at the rear. Behemoth made it to the semi-finals of Series II, but was knocked out by Killertron. It came back again in Series III and the First World Championships.

c is for **CASSIUS** Rex Garrod's incredibly popular robot changed Robot Wars for ever with its amazing 'self-right mechanism' (Srimech) which meant fights could continue even if a robot was flipped over. Cassius is also famous for its death-defying attacks on the house robots.

"It's my decision, Beckham's dropped!"

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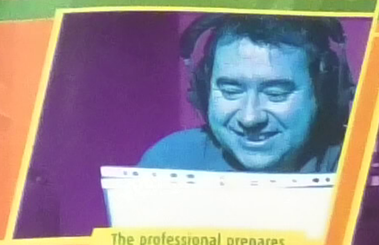
Shoot Giant Killers (FOR LADS WHO LOVE TO MANAGE)

This is a stand-alone product. A connection to the Internet is not required in order to enjoy all the features of this product.

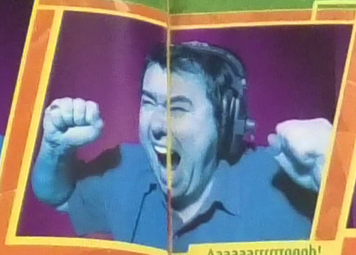
WEIGHT 200KG
LENGTH 120CM
WIDTH 120CM
HEIGHT 130CM
SIR KILLALOT
ROBOTWARS

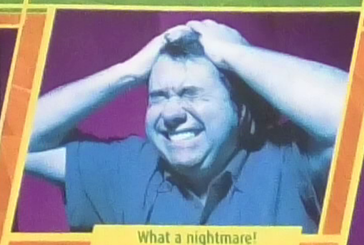
rwm's david hayles hears out sir shoutalot himself, jonathan pearce

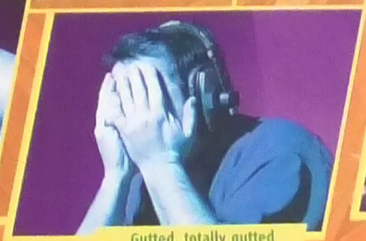

The professional prepares

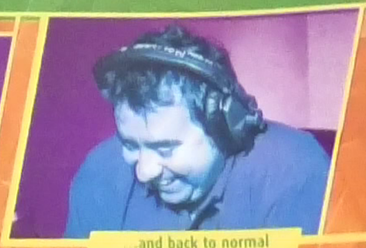
Time to warm the tonsils up

Ooooooooooooooo!


Aaaaaarrrrrrgggh!


What a nightmare!


Gutted, totally gutted


...and back to normal

"What a disaster! He's gone the wrong way. This is hopeless!" No, Jonathan Pearce isn't commentating at the moment, he's worried he's going to be late and that the taxi driver has got us lost. Pearce has just finished voicing episode 13 of Robot Wars. Now it's midday and we're bombing along the motorway towards the Arsenal training ground where he's got an important meeting with Arsene Wenger.

To say Pearce is a busy man would be like saying Sir Killalot is a big robot. "I do commentary on 150 football matches a year," he says, surprisingly soft-spoken in real life. "Robot Wars is 22 episodes this series, the most we've ever done. It's hectic – I hardly get a chance to go home."

SHOUT & ABOUT

Not that he's complaining. Pearce has worked his way up from covering Bristol City football games on local radio to being a big-name commentator. His career really took off after Euro '96 when his unique commentating style clicked with listeners. "I've always said, the only thing I am is a football fan with a microphone, and I hope that my passion as a fan comes through."

Legend has it that Pearce's parents used to have to lock him upstairs in his room, tired silly of hearing him commentate on his Subbuteo games. "It's in my blood. Football's always been one of the biggest things in my life."

He brings the same mad style to his commentary on Robot Wars. "The speed is frightening. Because the battles are over so quickly, they need someone who can keep up. They've never said why they chose me. I'm glad they did, because I thoroughly enjoy it."

VERY PUNNY

Although he does the commentaries in a sound booth after the series has been filmed, Pearce doesn't use a script, but you'd be forgiven for thinking he does. When the Plunderstorm bot was pulverised onscreen that morning, Pearce let rip with a volley of well-timed puns. "There's a hail of blows raining down... the forecast is that Plunderstorm will be snuffed out shortly and there'll be sunny skies ahead for Thermidor!"

"The best thing about his commentary is that it is spontaneous," says series producer Bill Hobbins. "If it was rehearsed at all you'd be able to tell." All Pearce does is read the bot biogs and when the tape starts rolling and he turns on the bluster, take cover.

"You have to put yourself into the pits with the teams, and into the control boxes and in with the crowd. You've got to become part of the whole Robot Wars thing. I don't think Robot Wars would be Robot Wars without that style of high-octane commentary."

LOVE AT FIRST FIGHT

The fights would lose something without Pearce, not least because he pokes fun at the roboteers. "But it is affectionate," he stresses. "I don't think you can be nasty, because they *are* Robot Wars. They're far more important than I am, or Craig or Philippa or anyone else. Some of them are great characters – the Plunderbird team for instance, and the way they are dedicated to mashing up the house robots. You've got to respect

YEEEEESS!

I do get quite worked up sometimes

fact these people work so hard on these machines. We're talking months of work. Mortis cost over £30,000. Then it's down a pit, on fire, the crowd cheering. Great, innit?"

"I think the teams shape the personalities of their robots. Some of the robots you do get affection for, like Cassius."

Having been on board for all three series, Pearce has seen how the show has grown, turning from a cult into a phenomenon. "The show's got its own language now, that only roboteer anoraks would ever think of using. The robots have got so much better. Rex Garrod brought in the flipper we call the SRI-MECH – self-righting mechanism.

And Hypnodisc is the most frightening robot I've seen. The destruction it deals out!"

"In the first series there was one that looked like a mouse, about that big [indicates about the size of a biscuit tin]. A little triangle on wheels."

Due to voice a fourth series later this year, Pearce is very much a part of the Robot Wars family along with Craig Charles and Philippa Forrester. "The three of us have got this great working relationship on the show – which is weird because I've never met them."

PRESENTERS & CORRECT

Does his total enthusiasm for Robot Wars suggest a future career as a roboteer?

"I struggle to change a plug, I can't work a video machine, the Internet baffles me, so I don't think so, but I'd love to do the commentary if Robot Wars ever had a live world championship dust-up."

He's certainly having fun now, even if it is a no-time-to-draw-breath-type fun. "I've done things that people can only dream of. I've met Pele, Bobby Moore, George Best... and the Plunderbird team."

The taxi screeches to a halt. Pearce leaps out and heads towards the training ground, a man on a mission.

"Er, how do we get back?" the taxi driver asks.

"Matilda looks pretty grumpy. I think she's suffering from pre-mechanical tension."

"Killertron's being ripped to shreds... Roadblock could choke on a furball."

"He's a Star Trek fan – beam him up, Scotty."

"Elvis will need some blue suede shoes to get out of there – you hound dogs!"

"Matilda is interfering with Recyclopse – urgh – what a dreadful thought!"

"Leighbot – pepperpot!"

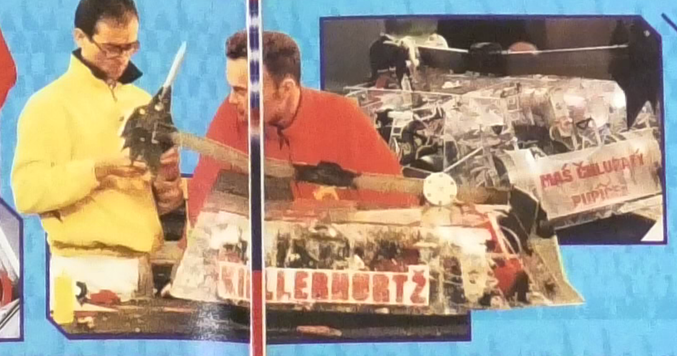
an odds-on favourite gets into trouble in the first robot wars world championships

CZECH MATE!

SPECS

Weight	77.4 kg
Dimensions	0.38 x 0.92 x 0.72 m
Clearance	0.07 m
Power	Electric motor
Weapons	CO2 powered flip-up
Country	England
Cost	£250
Team	George Francis – Captain Ian Swan, Richard Swan

Opinion Chaos 2, along with Hypnodisc, took Series III by storm with its speed, manoeuvrability and flipping

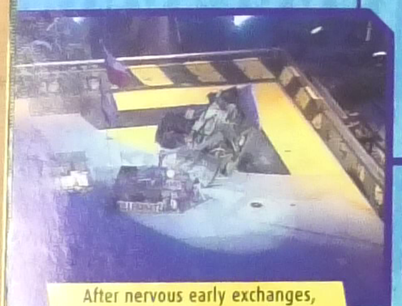


KILLER HURTŽ

SPECS

Weight	83 kg
Dimensions	0.9 x 1.41 x 0.74 m
Clearance	0.04 m
Power	2 x 24 Volt motors
Weapons	Pneumatic powered axe
Country	Czech Republic
Cost	£2000
Team	John Reid – Captain Dominic Parkinson

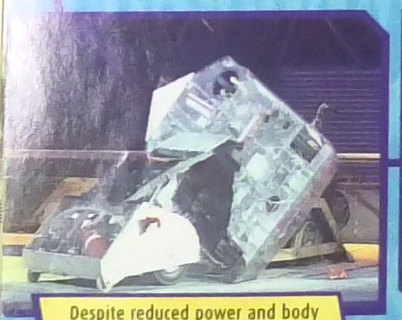
Opinion With the motto 'You have a hairy tummy button' written in Czech on the front, it was a welcome return



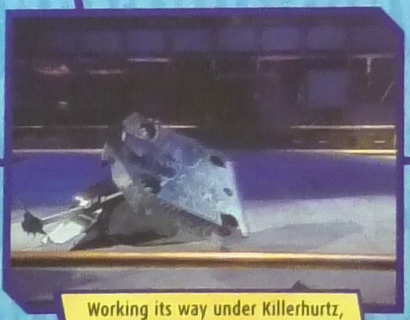
After nervous early exchanges, crafty Chaos 2 tries to lure Killerhurtz into Shunt's CPZ...

...but instead finds itself trapped against the arena wall by the angry house robot, as Killerhurtz moves in

Killerhurtz drives its axe into Chaos 2, and when Shunt decides to do the same it pierces Chaos's CO_2 canister



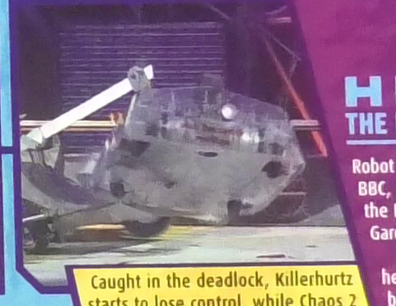
Despite reduced power and body damage, Chaos 2 turns the tables on its foe and gives it a ferocious flip



Working its way under Killerhurtz, Chaos 2 shoves the robot at speed across the arena floor to its doom

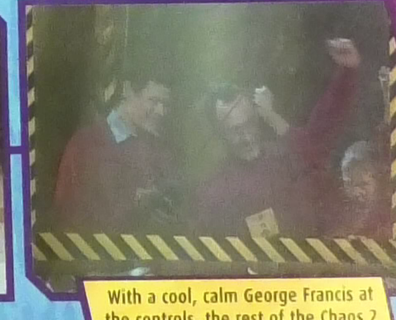
Showing no mercy, Chaos 2 flips Killerhurtz for a final time, to the dismay of the Czech Republic

Losing power by the second from the leaking canister, Chaos 2 is lifted helplessly into the air



Caught in the deadlock, Killerhurtz starts to lose control, while Chaos 2 desperately tries to wriggle free

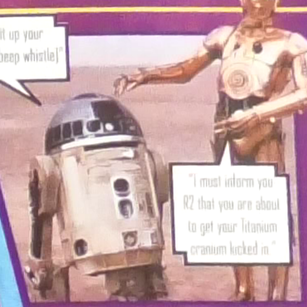
Killerhurtz lies on its back on the arena floor, twitching helplessly like a dying shopping trolley



With a cool, calm George Francis at the controls, the rest of the Chaos 2 team can't hide their joy at winning

This classic clash was taken from the exclusive video **Robot Wars – The First World Championships**, out now from Universal Pictures Video, priced around £12.99

FANTASY FIGHT C-3PO v R2-D2



C-3PO

STRENGTHS Ability to bore opponents to death. Can insult in over 6 million languages

WEAKNESSES Would rather "Have a rational discussion." Complete coward

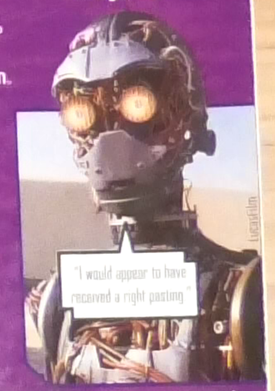
TACTIC Will demand proper boxing rules

R2-D2

STRENGTHS Rotating head gives 360° visibility, and can be Hypnodisc-style weapon. Holographic recorder projects decoy image of Princess Leia

WEAKNESSES Bad reaction to power surges and C-3PO's voice

TACTIC Headbutt C-3PO below the belt



RESULT C-3PO's voice will go up several octaves as his protocol circuits get some nasty bruises. R2-D2 wins!

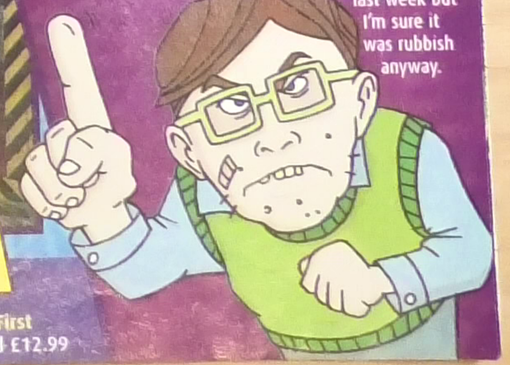
HUGH MANOID

THE MAN WHO LOVES TO HATE ROBOT WARS

Robot Wars should be banned! I've written to the boss of the BBC, Sir Ainsley Harriot, but he hasn't replied. Typical! Why can't the Beeb produce more family shows like Changing Pet Hospital Garden School?

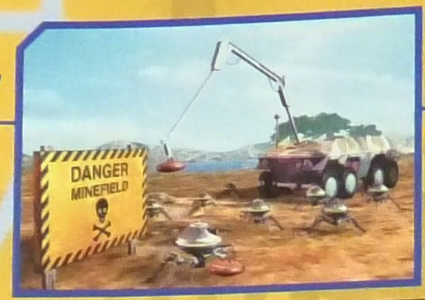
The presenter, Craig Forrester, is awful and can't decide if he's a man or a woman. Jonathan Pearce Brosnan was much better as James Bond. Robot Wars should be presented by Hugh Scully and have wooden 'robots' that don't whizz all over the place. Sometimes they could be worth a lot of money. It could be called the Antiques Roadshow.

PS When is the next Robot Wars on, so I can complain again? I missed it last week but I'm sure it was rubbish anyway.



REAL ROBOTS

could the battle droids of Star Wars be closer than you think? we sneak a peek at the latest spy and combat bots



RESISTANCE IS USELESS!

Watch out – there could be a robot spying on you this very minute! Surveillance bots have come a long way over the last 20 years, from chunky 4-wheeled robot guard-dogs, to super-advanced surveillance 'robomoths'. But do we have the technology to build kick-ass battle droids? Our spies have been gathering their own evidence for you to make up your own mind.

ROBOT ROVERS

A basic surveillance bot is the MDARS (Mobile Detection Assessment and Response System), developed by the American Naval Warfare Systems Center in San Diego. Like a robot guard-dog, he patrols warehouses and storage sites sniffing out dodgy characters, floods, fires and chemical leaks. Each 4-wheeled guard comes with SONAR, RADAR, sensors, and go-faster stripes (well, possibly!). The only difference from a real guard-dog is that it doesn't bite the pants of intruders!

MEET MARVIN

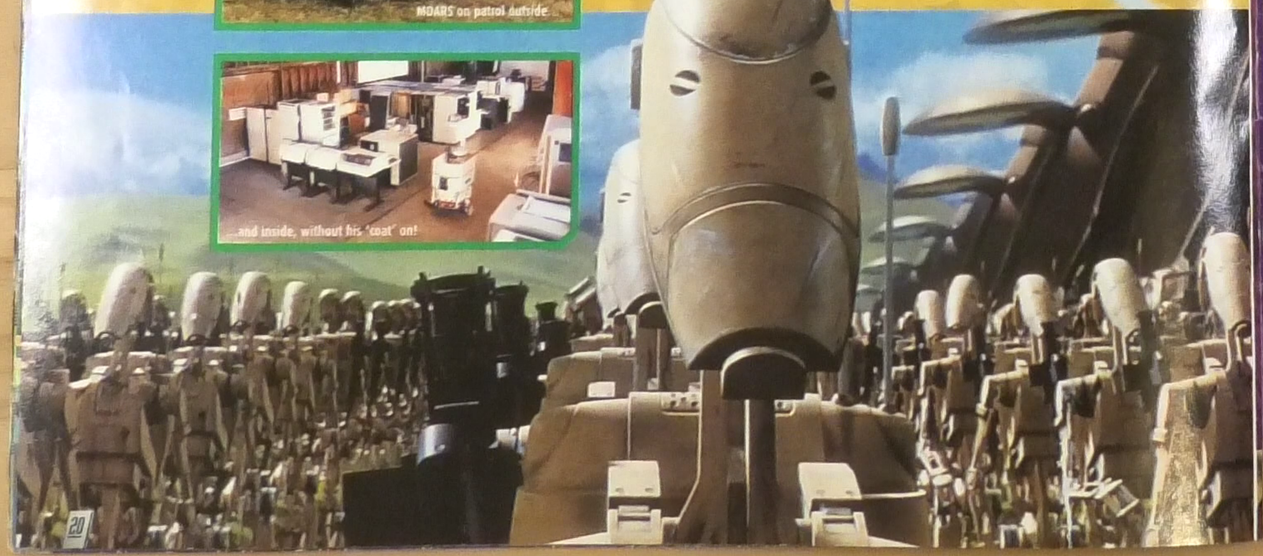
The Intelligent Systems and Robotics Center (ISRC) at Sandia in California invented Marvin, a super-tough surveillance robot. Marvin can be chucked from a plane or lorry without being damaged, thanks to its special wheels which are soft enough to absorb any sudden impact. He's symmetrical which means he can operate either way up without the need for a self-righting flipper like Cassius. Marvin is remote-controlled by an operator and can spin on the spot, letting him video his surroundings very easily. Although he was designed by the military, Marvin and similar machines such as the Urban Robot (which you might have seen on Tomorrow's World recently), will be used by fire brigades and police forces in situations too dangerous for humans.

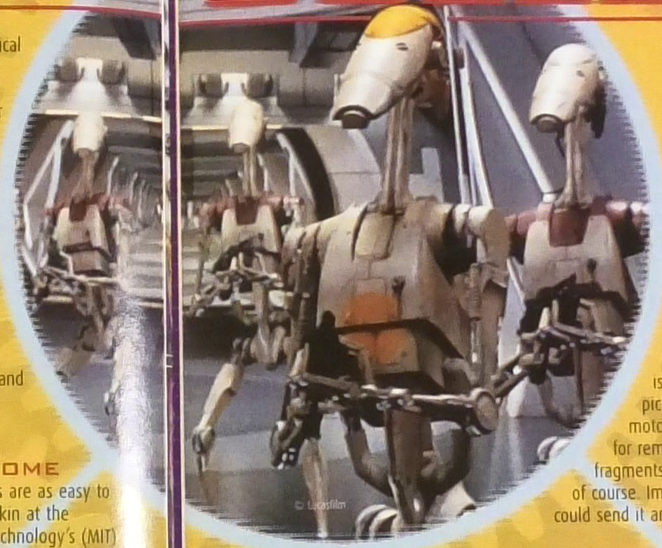
SWARM WELCOME

Not all surveillance robots are as easy to spot as Marvin. James McLurkin at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's (MIT) artificial intelligence labs has created a tiny army of a dozen 1.2 ounce robotic 'ants'. Each is packed with 17 sensors that allow the ant to recognise where it is and where other ants are. They can even pick up very small objects thanks to tiny motors and batteries. They will be very handy for removing dangerous materials like bomb fragments by remote control, as well as spying, of course. Imagine owning your own insect bot – you could send it anywhere without anyone ever noticing!

MDARS on patrol outside

...and inside, without his 'coat' on!

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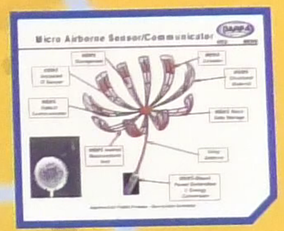


>> how to spot a spy droid

> There's an aerial sticking out of your cereal
> A fly zooms past going 'beep' instead of 'buzz'
> A security guard says 'Halt human'
> Glowing eyes appear at your bedroom window

MICRO MACHINES

So you reckon robot ants are cool? Well, the most incredible surveillance robots are yet to come! Huge sums of money are being spent on developing impossibly small devices which can be used for medical and scientific purposes, as well as surveillance. Progress is being made developing microscopic gears, sensors and even microscopic engines driven using the movement of atoms. Truly mind-blowing!

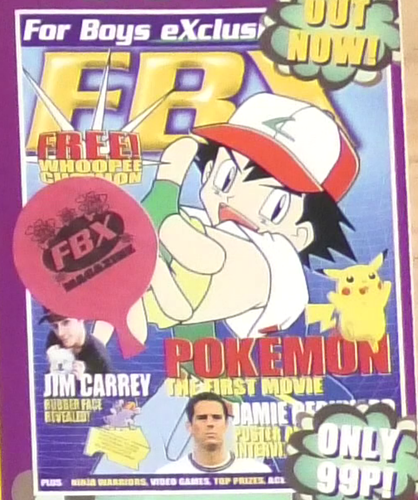
INTO BATTLE!

So what's the future? The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) has invested millions of dollars working on micro air vehicles (MAVs) which soldiers can use to observe enemy troops on the other side of the battlefield. The next obvious step would be to attach tiny weapons to them, so that enemies might end up fighting off 'swarms' of deadly MAVs. In the far future, soldiers might not be needed at all, with battle droids like the ones from The Phantom Menace obeying the orders sent to them from controllers hundreds of miles away. Could it ever happen? More info as we receive it – if a battle droid doesn't get us first...

>> proper uses for surveillance bot

> Hover a robomoth over the class swot's desk during exams and relay all the answers back to you!
> Sneak an ant robot into the cinema to video the latest films
> Drive Marvin into next door's garden to get your football back
> Hide a microbot in the staffroom and hear the teachers talking about you
> Station a patrol robot outside your toilet to keep people out

THE NO1 MAG FOR BOYS!



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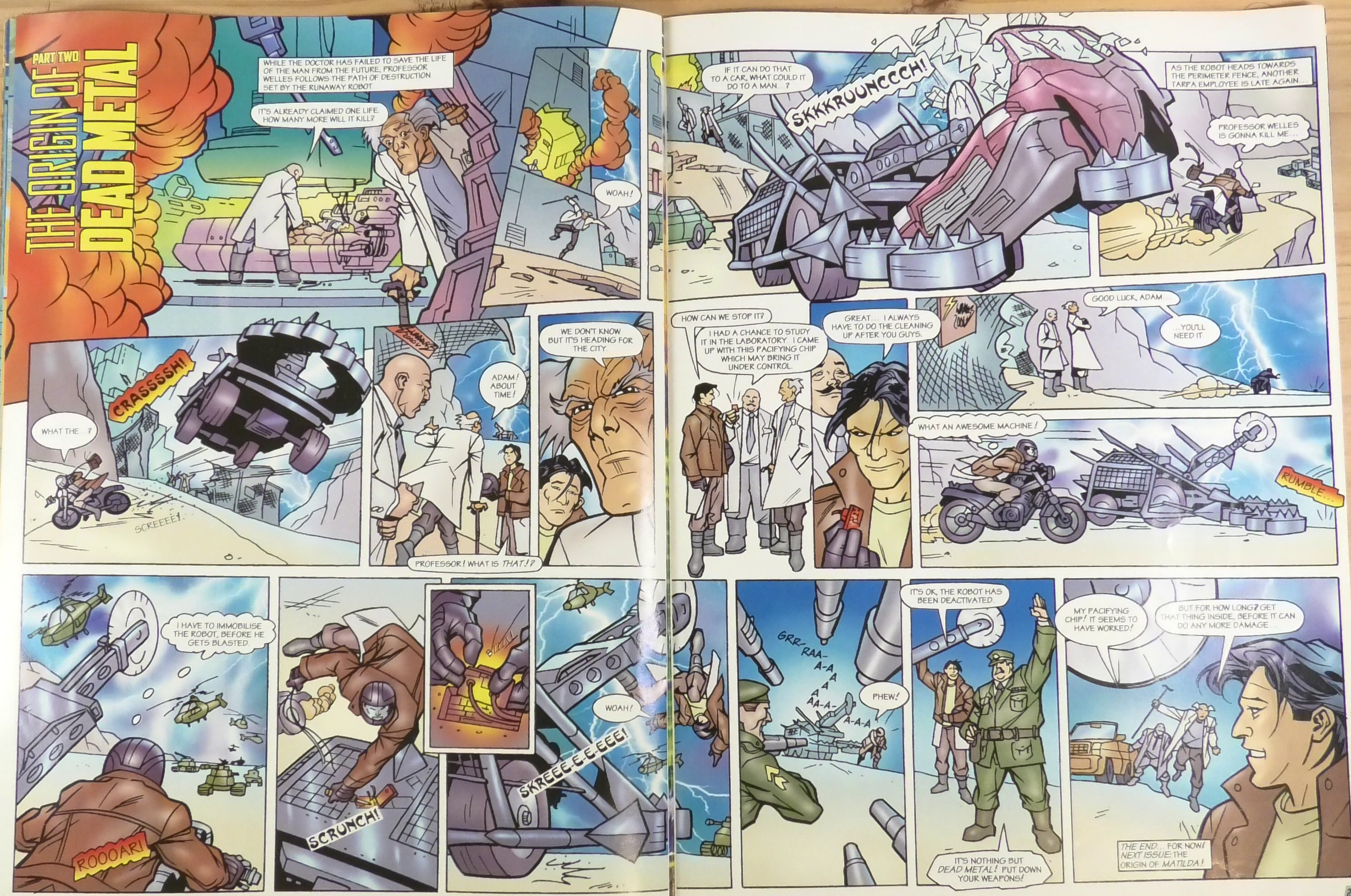

Illustration: John Ross, Colour: Alan Craddock, Script: Dewey Moore

NAME **CHRIS REYNOLDS**

DATE OF BIRTH 11 / 07 / 58 OCCUPATION Head of BBC Visual Effects Dept

EDUCATION Winchmore Comprehensive, North London Civil Engineering Apprenticeship Ordinary National Diploma Degree in Architecture

BRAIN SCAN

WHAT DO YOU DO ON THE SHOW? [J STRONG, CAMBRIDGE]

As special-effects supervisor for Robot Wars, I oversee the design and construction of the house robots, and I'm responsible for them as they battle the contestant robots. But I don't just work on Robot Wars. I designed the gunge machines for Noel's House Party, and spaceships and laser-blasters for Doctor Who – anything hi-tech.

HOW DID YOU GET SUCH A BRILLIANT JOB? [R PARKER, LEEDS]

My father and grandfather were engineers and I've been building things since I was eight. I left school without any qualifications aged 16 and did an engineering apprenticeship. I had to do my exams again at night school. I worked as an electrical engineer, a civil engineer and an architect before joining the BBC Visual Effects Department. As far as qualifications go, it's very much across the board – art for the design part of the job, physics so you know about use of materials, and metalwork so you know how to build the finished design.

WHEN DID YOU BUILD YOUR FIRST ROBOT? [B PHILLIPS, BRISTOL]

I used to build robots out of Meccano in my dad's shed. I made guns, go-karts, and took all sorts of things apart, like lawnmowers. It didn't matter if I couldn't get them back together. I never could work out that gearbox on my 50cc Honda and my dad is still a bit cross about a camera I took apart!

DO YOU HAVE A FAVOURITE CONTESTANT ROBOT? [C ANDERSEN, COLCHESTER]

You sometimes get the combination of a brilliant robot and really good fighter. Razer is like that – he looks incredible, it's a superb design with a fantastic weapon. Beautifully engineered as well.

HAVE THE CONTESTANT ROBOTS IMPROVED SINCE SERIES 1? [H CHARLES, LANCS]

I was disappointed with Series II robots, I didn't think they were very good. In Series I, considering how quickly they were put together, there were some excellent bots. And last year there were some really brilliant-looking robots. Crocodilotron looked great, but got knocked out straight away, which was a shame.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD ROBOT? [M CLIFFORD, GLOUCS]

On Robot Wars it's important to have a variety of robots. If every robot was like Chaos 2 it would get boring. It's important to have some wacky robots, like Elvis and Nemesis.

HOW DO YOU SEE ROBOT WARS IN THE FUTURE? [K ROBERTSON, GLASGOW]

I think we'll see a lot more sophisticated robots and some really interesting weaponry.

DO YOU THINK ROBOT WARS IS DANGEROUS? [T BROOKFORD, SUFFOLK]

Yes it is – but we control it with strict safety rules. It's more dangerous than working on feature films with fireballs and explosions – there you are a long way from the action, and people have protective clothing. The problem with Robot Wars is that we're surrounded by lethal weapons!

IS ROBOT WARS YOUR FAVOURITE TV SHOW? [J PALLISTER, NORWICH]

Definitely – mainly because my children are obsessed with it! I watched the last series five or six times. Now *that's* sad...

NEXT MONTH: Paul Kirrage, Series III Director. Do YOU have a question for him? Send your questions to Brain Scan, Robot Wars Magazine, Room A1130, BBC Worldwide, 80 Wood Lane, London W12 0TT or e-mail us at rwm@bbc.co.uk

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Subscribe to RWM and you'll not only get the best magazine around delivered directly to your door, every month – you'll also receive a brilliant Meccano 7 Model Set* worth £7.99, totally free! So what are you waiting for? Fill in the form below now!

Subscriptions received by 6 April will start with Issue 2. Forms received after this date will begin with issue 3 – so get 'em in early!

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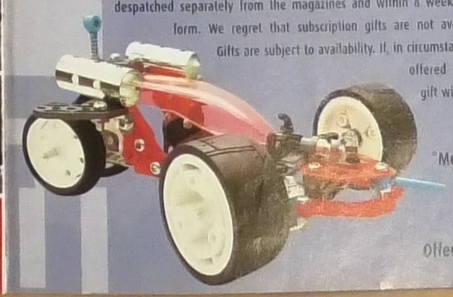

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LET'S TALK WARS!

MAILSHOT

>> from peter ellis, sussex
Me and my brother have got a good idea for Series IV of Robot Wars. For our robot I will be dressed in plastic cartons sprayed silver and my weapon is a cricket bat. My brother Will is going to control me by shouting commands from the side of the arena. Is there anything in the rules to stop us entering?

> Yes Pete, the rule against being completely mental. But you might be on to something – while the robots fight in the arena, the roboteers could bash each other in the pits! Er, maybe not.

>> from c peters, milton keynes
Are there plans to make any new house robots for the next series of Robot Wars? It would be great to see a new character!

> Yes, there will be a 'Refbot' (see page 2 for more info). We'll have the full details for you soon!

>> from j campbell, dover
If you are all so smart, see if you can answer this. I have built a robot for the next series of Robot Wars using a steel roll-frame with Kevlar™ protectors, and although it is has dual servos linked to two high-torque drive shafts with extendable pin wheels, I still can't manage to get the rotation flux to engage. What am I doing wrong?

> Try pressing the 'on' button.

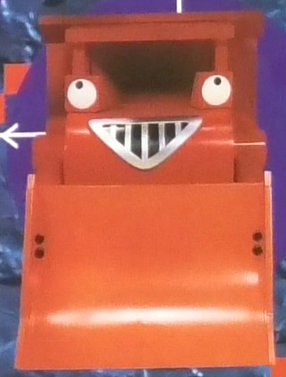
DICTIONARY CORNER

LEARN HOW TO SOUND LIKE A ROBOTEER

- Smacked bot Losing contestant robot
- Robutterflies Pre-fight nerves
- Inter-challenge temporal maintenance Bodge job
- Beverage imbibement facility Canteen
- Gravitational descent hazard The pit
- Robohobo bearded contestant
- Mechanoid interface deprivation Missing an episode
- Temporal reductive navigational divergence syndrome Blimey, my radio controller is on the blink

<ROBOLIKE

Axe-slamming house robot Shunt looks a lot like Muck the digger from Bob the Builder. Could they be related? If you spot another Robolike, let us know!



BLACK BOX

>> Useless facts rescued from the RW wreckage!

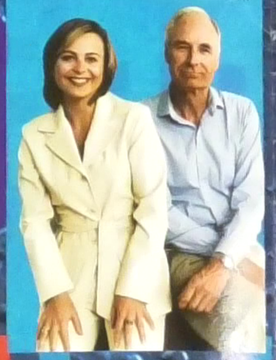
>> An anagram of Craig charles is 'Grr! I clash ace!' Maybe there's a hidden roboteer in there after all...

SYSTEM CHECK

KNOW YOUR ROBOT WARS FROM YOUR RABBIT DRAWERS? PROVE IT!

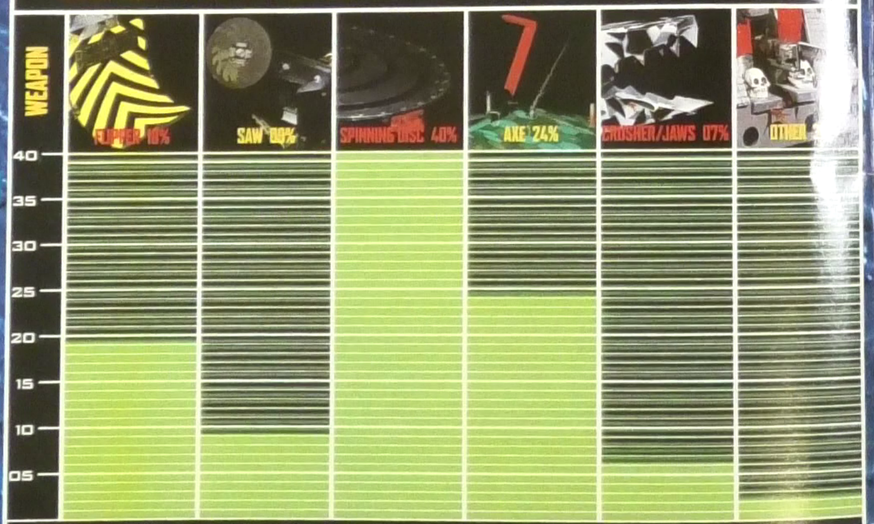
01 When was it first broadcast on BBC2?
02 Who is Philippa's co-host on Tomorrow's World?
03 Who won RW Series II?
04 Name Craig's character in Red Dwarf.
05 Where was Series III filmed?

ANSWERS 1 February 1998, 2 Peter Snow, 3 Point Attack, 4 Lister, 5 Elstree studios, near London



THE BIG BALLOT>>

Every month, we'll ask the question on everyone's lips to settle your arguments once and for all! First of WHICH WEAPON IS MOST EXCITING? From these results, it's not hard to see who's hot right now!



NEXT MONTH Which House Robot is the coolest? E-mail or post your votes to the address at the top of the page

TALKING POINT: SEND FOR THE SENTINEL?

The format of Series III meant that The Sentinel, a powerful robotic arm featured in the 'Gauntlet' game, sadly got chucked on the scrap heap. Should he be brought back? There's been a hot debate at www.robotwars.co.uk.

>> By D-STRUCTION Hey, bring the Sentinel back. I'm sure I wasn't the only one that enjoyed seeing this robot. I know RW has changed since Series II but I want to see it back in the battle arena.

>> By YOMMA/ZIPPY The Sentinel was junk! I'm glad it went.

>> By ALAN The Sentinel was utter poo...

>> By ANON The Sentinel is back on a building site in Romford.

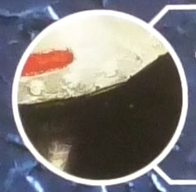
>> By BEN LING I think it would be a cool idea to bring the Sentinel back – perhaps it would inspire people to learn how to drive their robots before the show?

>> By DAWN I think the vote is that Sentinel was pants and poo, and quite frankly, I would have to agree.

>> By INKY At the end of last series the Sentinel was at the side of the arena and it sure gave Mortis and Killertron summin' to avoid. I agree Sentinel sucked at first but that was before the arm could move up and down. Then it kicked some more ass. And can't you guys come up with better words than 'poo' and 'pants'?

>> By CRAIG I'll give you a reason that the Sent is poo.
1) It has no mobility.
2) It has no destructive power.
3) If it does pin you, the 30sec rule means it has to let go!

>> By INKY Robots like Shunt and Dead Metal have been modified between each series to be improved so they could always modify the Sentinel somehow, dontcha think?

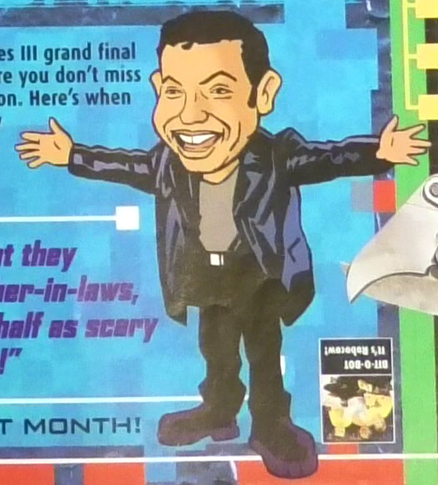


<BIT-O-BOT

Which bit of which bot is this? If you can't figure it out, the answer's at the robottom (geddit?) of the page!

TRANSMISSION

With the Robot Wars Series III grand final nearly upon us, make sure you don't miss a nanosecond of the action. Here's when to catch the best TV show in the world:
FRIDAYS @ 18.45 & 23.20
SUNDAYS @ 11.45



"You know what they say about mother-in-laws, But mine isn't half as scary as Robot Wars!"

SEE YOU NEXT MONTH!

BIT-O-BOT
It's Roboteer!

NEXT MONTH

who can resist the power of

HYPNODISC?

FEATURING

secrets of the most amazing weapon of series III

PLUS

- sgt bash profiled
- the origin of matilda
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